

Technical Report Format

The presentation and report of any engineering or scientific work are probably as important as the actual work. Credit for a discovery or development of new concepts cannot be received until the work has been described in a report or paper that is readily available for other people to read. It is often stated that engineers upon graduation will spend their first few months of work doing about 30 percent engineering and 70 percent writing about it. Technical writing is an important skill for engineers and computer scientist. In numerous environments, a report is written for a specific **audience**. Thus, it is important to first identify the intended audience (e.g., a supervisor as compared to a colleague) and to recognize the type and order of information the reader is seeking. The report format, therefore, varies. However, most reports include three essential elements: introduction, narrative, and conclusion. Remember that **brevity and clarity are important** and the report should be easy to read. All reports should be written in the third person (e.g., use "the pressure was measured..." instead of "we measured the pressure..."). There are no excuses for misspelled words. Also, proof reading cannot be over-emphasized. If possible, have a friend read the report for grammar, style, spelling, clarity, and typographical errors. Also, make sure nouns and verbs agree. The report format to be used for your term paper is as follows:

1. Title page
2. Abstract (see links on the web page on hints to writing an abstract)
3. Table of contents
4. Introduction (see links on the web page on hints to writing an introduction)
5. Brief statement of objective of the report.
6. Body of the report.
7. Conclusions and lessons learned.
8. References
9. Appendices (if needed)

Slightly modified from:

http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/~expeng/labmanual/rep_format.pdf